SOUTH HACKNEY CHURCH.

It is upwards of three years since this church was commenced; and having watched with some interest its gradual progress towards completion, we may say that, long as this time appears, we do not think that either the artificers, or those who have had the direction of them, have been idle in their work.

On the 30th December, 1844, the men commenced digging for foundations; in February, 1845, the concrete was commenced; the first stone was laid May 15; on the 1st September, 1847, the spire was commenced; on the 21st February, 1848, the cross was fixed on it; and on Thursday, the 20th inst., the building was consecrated.

It is a cross church, in the Early English style (or first pointed), of very large dimensions, and possesses considerable grandeur from the breadth and simplicity of its parts, while the delicacy of the carving and other detail admits of close inspection. Throughout the whole, "truthfulness" has been systematically adhered to: there is no deal stained to look like oak; no "cast" ornament; no plaster groin, scored and coloured to look like (how unlike!) stone: but we see a stone-groined ceiling over the whole of the chancel, spanning upwards of 30 feet; the ceiling of the intersection boarded over its natural construction, and painted with appropriate texts and emblems; while the rest of the ceiling is merely the under side of a roof, boldly and substantially constructed of fir, for the most part, we believe, unwrought, but designed after the manner of the early woodwork of the fourteenth century. The same feeling pervades the walls, where, though stone is freely used in the piers, arches, spandrels, corbels, and windows, yet where plastering appears as a covering to the rough stone (no bricks have been used), there is no attempt to make it seem other than it is.

All the seats are of oak, and mostly formed of stall-ends, with finials in great variety. The two first seats are well carved, on the elbows of which appear, on one the crest of the rector and the badge of the patron saint, and on the other side the dove with the olive branch, and the lynx, as an emblem of watchfulness.

The pulpit and reading desk, of oak, stand one on each side of the chancel arch, and are well designed and executed: they are each raised a few steps only from the chancel floor, which is covered with encaustic tiles.

A stone seat runs all round the chancel, under a continued trefoiled arcade, in seven triple compartments, which form the sedilia and the table of prothesis, on the north and south, while the altar-table and two chairs occupy the eastern sides: the two compartments outside the altar-rails are occupied by the rector's seats and the entrance to the vestry.

Mr. Edward C. Hakewill was the architect.

These are the principal dimensions of the church:—Total length, *internally*, from east to west, 172 feet; viz., chancel, 44 feet; nave, 103 feet 6 inches; tower, 24 feet 6 inches: total length, *externally*, 192 feet: total width, internally, 61 feet; viz., nave, 37 feet; north and south aisles, 12 feet each: total length in transepts from north to south, 92 feet: height, internally, from pavement to highest part of roof, 60 feet; externally, from ground to top of cross of spire, 187 feet.

The following details of the cost may be useful for reference hereafter.

The amount of contracts with the Church Commissioners was		£11,819
Thus separated:—		
Cobb (mason)	£7,429	
Norris (carpenter)	1,100	
Cooper (slater and plumber)	432	
Hawken (joiner and parlor)	736	
White* (contractor for the spire)	1,150	
Architect's commission, clerk of works, and incidentals	972	
Amount of decoration-fund, aided by subscriptions, for the following purposes:—		1,563
The oak pewing, screen, reading-desk, and altar-table	£412	
The arcades of chancel, and stone groin of ditto, and the stone carving	995	
The painting of chancel, and sundries	156	

* Most of the carving was executed by White.

CARVED CHIMNEY-PIECE: SAFFRON WALDEN, ESSEX.

Amount of works afterwards agreed to; in addition to the above, viz.:—		
Painting ceiling of intersection (25*l.*), additional oak seats (88*l.* 8*s.*), pew doors (80*l.*), slate louvres in belfry windows (40*l.*), lining inside of doors with oak, fittings of vestry, and contract for warming, by W. Jeakes (175*l.*)		630
To these amounts must be added the value of individual gifts to the church, including,		
The seven painted windows of chancel (by Wailes)	£350	
The west windows of aisles (by the same)	80	
The two single-light, north clerestory window (by Castell)	10	
The single-light, south clerestory (by Ward and Nixon)	16	
The memorial window (by the same)	26	
The two transept windows (by Powell)	125	
The pulpit, gift of the rector's wife, Mrs. Norris (by Bennett)	75	
The altar rails	50	
The font	30	
With other items		878
The eight bells (given by several individuals)		700
Architect and clerk of works, extra		150
Making a total of		£15,740

The church will accommodate 572 persons in pews, 462 in the free sittings, and 466 children;—total, 1,500.

SANITARY STATE OF ST. MARTIN'S-IN-THE-FIELDS.—Complaints have been made by a number of householders and ratepayers, that the churchwardens have refused to convene a vestry-meeting on the vile state of various courts, streets, and yards, though requested by 100 householders to do so, while ready enough to give the use of the vestry-room for party or political purposes.

CARVED FIRE-PLACE, FROM SIR THOMAS MORE'S HOUSE, CHELSEA, NOW AT SAFFRON WALDEN, ESSEX.

THIS fragment of the period of the *Renaissance*—for it is only the upper portion of an enriched chimney-piece—is now fitted up in the private residence of Mr. Francis Gibson, at Saffron Walden, Essex. It did not, however, originally belong to the town or county, but is traditionally reported to have been brought from Beaufort House, Chelsea, the residence of the great Sir Thomas More, and where Erasmus has commemorated his visit to him. That house became afterwards the residence of a series of noblemen most remarkable in history. Lord Burghleigh and Sir Robert Cecil held it. It was afterwards purchased by Charles I., and by him presented to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. During the Protectorate, Bulstrode Whitelocke lived in it. At the restoration it was given to George, second Duke of Buckingham. It then passed to the Duke of Bedford, and ultimately to Sir Hans Sloane, by whom it was pulled down in 1740. Sir Robert Cecil is said to have rebuilt the house in the reign of Elizabeth, but he may have re-used many of the internal fittings and decorations, among the rest this chimney-piece, which was too fine a work to be slighted, and is certainly of More's period: the style of its enrichment is precisely similar to that adopted by More in the chapel he attached to Chelsea Church, as displayed in the columns, &c., of that building. This chimney-piece is richly carved in chesnut, the figures in very high relief, that in the centre standing within a deeply cut circular frame. It is not very easy to say what this figure is intended to represent; it is most probably one of those allegorical representations of one of the virtues or senses, whose triumph is displayed beneath, such moralizations being very common at the period when this carving was executed. The ornamental details of each pilaster are executed with much delicacy.

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